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THE

# CHRISTIAN PHYSICIAN

AN ADDRESS

Delivered at the Graduating Exercises  
of the American Medical Mis-  
sionary College, June 18, 1906  
Battle Creek, Michigan



By

Dr. HOWARD A. KELLY

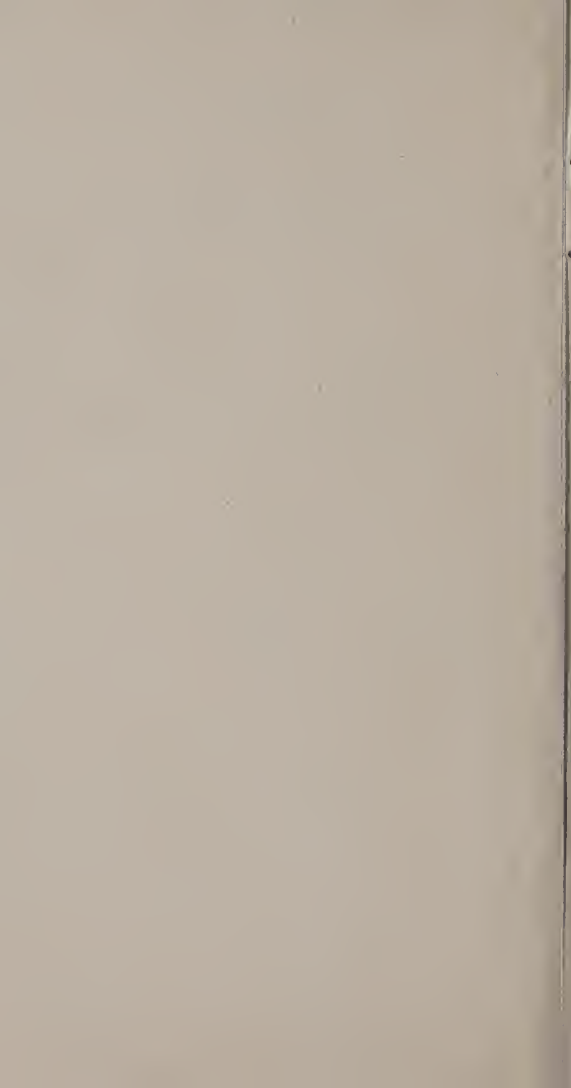
of Baltimore, Md.



THE  
Christian Physician

By  
Dr. HOWARD A. KELLY  
Baltimore, Md.





## THE CHRISTIAN PHYSICIAN\*

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I am glad to come and say a few words to you, because you represent an unusual and exceptional institution. You represent a little oasis really, in one sense, in the great desert of medical schools, where all ought to be Christians. And the beauty of the school is that you carry out the true ideal of medical work—the improvement of opportunity for Christian service. That is all we are called to be physicians for—nothing else but that we may win friends, and bring our friends where true friendship ought to be brought, to God through Christ. Now, my friends at home get tired of my talking this way sometimes, for I am very insistent about this, and they say they do wish Dr. Kelly would either be a preacher or a doctor, one or the other, so they may know where he stands. I do not want to be a preacher. I just want to be a common, ordinary Christian physician, using such opportunities for ministry as occur in the pur-

\* A stenographic report of an address by Dr. Howard A. Kelly, of Baltimore, at the commencement exercises of the American Medical Missionary College, June 18, 1906. The author gave his address no title, but the one chosen seems fitting both for the address and for the speaker, whose great work in the medical profession, recognized throughout the civilized world, is only equaled by what he has accomplished in various lines of Christian and evangelical activity.

suit of my calling,—the advantages such as a baker, or grocer, or any one else may use in the pursuit of his calling.

Now, I take my position very seriously this evening, as I come some hundreds of miles to address you, summoned by your teachers and friends to stand temporarily as a concrete embodiment of their collective sentiment upon education, which is in many ways momentous. I cannot therefore be content merely to express pleasure and kindly sympathy in fitting phrases, but would gladly use such grace as may be given me to bring you a message which shall strengthen you, and go out as a blessing with each one of you into your chosen field of work. May our Father graciously grant that as we thus enjoy this unusual privilege of Christian fellowship as scribes made disciples unto the kingdom of heaven, we may for our refreshment, like men who are householders, bring forth out of our treasures tonight some things both new and old.

Let us consider together some things touching the opportunities of life, your calling, and in what spirit you go forth. First, let us look briefly at this present time. To you this is a time of transition. Back of you lies the familiar well-trodden path. Before you the way seems hazy and uncertain. You are not quite sure what the next year, perhaps the next few months or weeks, may bring forth. The anxiety and distress which may be associated with such an uncertainty was just a few days ago vividly depicted before me in my library in the distressed form of one who, unexpectedly cut off from accustomed sources of revenue, has no immediate prospect of remunerative employment.

What lies ahead?—What failures? What humiliations?—Who can tell? Indeed, my friend, who was in a very distressed and pessimistic mood, and might well be, not having any Christian hope that I could discern, wanted to go somewhere where it is exceedingly dangerous to live—to the Philippines, or Panama; she didn't care if she lost her life. Such people haven't anything better to rely upon.

Now there are two ways of approaching this great question of What next? One is by keenly watching the opportunities as they present themselves, and grasping the right one at the right moment, and so pressing on to success. This is the method of the world briefly formulated of old as "*capere occasionem*," snatching the opportunity. Of these worldly wise ones Christ said, "Your time is always ready." A somewhat similar expression of the world's wisdom is this: "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,"—get what you can now out of life, who knows what may come next? It is the world's time which taken at the flood leads on to victory. But let me remind you that we, as Christians, are not thus guided. Though using all prudence, and every talent our Father has given us, both in preparing for and conducting life's affairs, we are yet wholly dependent upon him for guidance. We say with glad surrender—

"I know not the way I am going,  
But well do I know my Guide.  
With a childlike faith I give my hand  
To the mighty Friend by my side."

We can act when success seems impossible, and we can withhold from action when

all the world about us deems it prudent to go ahead, saying like Christ our Lord, "My time is not yet," when God has not made the way clear. We can then say with David, with entire abandonment to the will of God, "My times are in thy hand."

#### WHAT NEXT?

Listen to our Lord's own words as he checks the natural desire to know What next? and note well that which he gives in its place. Note, too, the importance of these words of his, for they are probably his very last. When the disciples asked him, in the first chapter of Acts, "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"—"It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority; but ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses." Gracious answer! Mark well its import. We may not have that discernment of times of which the world boasts as its peculiar talent and handmaid to success, but in place of this our Lord confers that which is far, far better, unfailing trust in the Father, who holds all earthly activities not laxly, but well established, fulfilling his will, in his own authority.

In place of a knowledge of times we have, therefore, *power*, promised by Christ, associated with the coming upon us of the Holy Spirit, marking us out, as he first marked Christ out; with the privilege of being his witnesses. O blessed, real, and wonderful service into which you have entered, bearing fruits even unto the life eternal! What a contrast! We cannot pause too long to consider it. On the one hand, knowledge of



the present times, limited in its horizon to earth alone, and often mistaken and misleading. On the other hand, power, an indwelling Spirit of God, bearing fruit through us both for time and eternity. I charge you, then, as you journey hence, that you ever keep this crowning—what shall I call it, command, warning, gift, or blessing?—in mind; and that you remember amidst all of life's vicissitudes that He never takes aught away from his child but to give that which is infinitely more valuable in its place. Choose you now, which shall it be,—worldly prudence, or the guidance of the power of the Spirit?

How, then, about the Christian's steps—his way, his path, his walk, his going out, and his coming in? Our Father says of the path of righteousness that it is as the dawning of light, that shineth more and more to the perfect day, while "the way of the wicked is as darkness, they know not at what they stumble." You know that the only way, and the only light on that way, as well as the truth by which we are guided, all center in and are represented by Christ. The very mention of all these synonyms which refer to the Christian's walk on earth is sufficient to recall to your minds the frequency with which they recur in God's Word. Turn to these words in the Bible, and see how they run through the whole like a golden thread, binding all together.

Let me under this caption give you one verse which I often like to dwell upon, found in Ephesians 2:10. I like to associate it with that other expression referred to in John 7—"Your time is always ready," then in Acts 1:3, the verse I have just

quoted, associate that with this in Ephesians 2:10: "For ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before prepared that we should walk in them." What comfort, what assurance, what strength do we thus find by simply turning over the pages of God's Word and learning his mind toward his servants. As for our liberty in the way, we have this promise, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and find pasture." We journey in one mind, for we are instructed to "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." What blessed realization of the traveler's viaticum of old as we learn that we also have his wisdom and his righteousness, according as it is written in I Cor. 1:31: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

What further provision is made for the way?—He himself clothes us, too, as he did in type his people Israel as they traveled through the wilderness, when their clothes and their shoes waxed not old, for, does not the Holy Spirit tell us, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof?"

The memorial of his death for sinners is our constant food, and we feed, too, on a glorified Christ day by day as his image is being formed in us. As he is all these things for the present time, so is he the goal of our affections, for as Paul has said, "I press toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Well, then, with all these provisions in view,

might Paul cry out, and we with him echo the Spirit's promise, "My God shall supply every need of yours, according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." And who can refrain from this tribute, like a voice from heaven heard once more on this dreary earth, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past tracing out."

Men rightly judge those avocations of men for which they are clearly fitted by natural endowment, to be of the nature of callings. That is to say, nature herself, in a voice not to be misunderstood, often claims this or that individual for some particular service. Now the sons of men in this judge rightly, showing that they are fully able to read the signs of the times; and we, too, may be sure that our Father, in the exercise of that wonderful economy manifested everywhere in his kingdom, by which he prepares each instrument for the work it is expected to do here, with no uncertain voice also speaks through the tongue of nature. Now, while all pursuits ought to be of the nature of callings, there are two which may be said to be callings *par excellence*, namely the Christian ministry and the ministry to the sick. In the ideal physician, as in his Lord, these two callings are blended. The unusual character of these callings (looking at things as they are, and not as they will be in that blessed age) lies in the personal nature of the call. He who undertakes a medical ministry (let these words never be divorced) has found in Christ the King of Glory, his own personal Savior; in the Holy Spirit, his teacher and

guide; and in God, a father from whom every fatherhood in heaven and earth is named; and in this presence has offered his life's service in compassion, like that of his Lord, to relieve sorrow and suffering, as a tribute to a great compelling love.

#### THE CALLING OF GOD.

You are called of God, and the very fact that he calls, implies an authoritative sending with a definite message, success in its delivery, and the accompaniment of the sender with the one sent. This appears more clearly in the Greek words, *pempo postello*, translated "send" and "apostle," than in the English version. All this appears in that splendid passage in 2 Cor. 5:17-21: "Wherefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation: to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God. Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

Remember that you are called to go forth, not to do drudgery or to labor as a common servant, but, like Christ, to do the service of sons, rendered in grace, to a loving Father. The Gospel of Mark, as we all

know, is the gospel of service. But if you take the world's meaning of service, you will look in vain to find it. It is the service of a son, rendered in grace. This is what Paul feels when he cries out, "For the love of Christ constraineth us."

The great characteristics of sons apart from love—the love which is the true bond with the Father, should be obedience, faithfulness, and patience. Take the Gospel of John and trace through it Christ's obedience to the Father, and then see how he brings his disciples, towards the close, into a like relationship, and makes their obedience the true test of their love.

I thought it was a great discovery when, several years ago, in Switzerland, I met Mrs. Howard Taylor, and we had a little talk together, and she pointed this out to me—this beautiful characteristic of the Gospel of John; how Christ himself has set that example of obedience, dwelt on it, and instinctively taught it to his disciples, and then in the end so clearly turns it over to them, that they may be in this world as he was.

Faithfulness is God's great characteristic. "I am Jehovah, I change not." And while we are being proved Christians we are to commit our souls unto God in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. We see God's faithfulness in a wonderful way in the realm of nature, in the uniformity of his laws, and I would urge you as Christians, in going out into the world, wherever you go, having this book (the Bible), not to keep your eye, as so many Christians unfortunately do, closed to God's other book. If you go to the other book first, you will misinterpret. You

won't find God. Men invariably look to God in the laws of nature. But it is nowhere said that God is law. It maligns God. It is a falsehood to say that God is law. God is found in the beauty, in the grace, in the tenderness, in the gentleness, in the sweetness of nature; not in law. Law is the framework of the house. It is the beams that are hidden away, the foundations that are under the ground. It is the skeleton of the man. If you were to depict a man to one who had not seen a man before, you would not bring a skeleton out of the closet and say, There is a man. No. Nor would you like in your own house, if you live at home and have a family, or with your father and mother, to have it said that the reign of law there is perfect, but rather that the reign of grace, of love is perfect. Law must be there, but you love God, love beauty, and knowing that it is for the good of all concerned, your hearts naturally obey. It ought not to be that law characterizes the house, but that grace and beauty characterize it. Take this thought of God's world. Go out and find him wherever you go. I think nothing so serves to turn us to false ways in this direction as this fact. He is there, but we must look to him in the Bible to learn that he is love and life; then we may go out to nature and find him anew.

And what shall I say of patience, that rare and precious Christian virtue? This is another of God's own characteristics which he has given to his servants, as we read in Romans 15:4: "Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind." It characterized Christ, too, as we read in Rev. 1:9 of "the patience of Jesus,"

and again in 2 Thess. 3:5: "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ." It is also spoken of distinctively as "the patience of the saints."

Now I would like to dwell somewhat particularly on this word "patience," and give it to you as your special message this evening; and I do this because, perhaps, it is the lesson I most need myself. I think we always talk with the most honest grace and interest about those things we see right ahead, that we do, in order to lay hold of them for ourselves. This I clearly see, that no sooner are you rescued by those everlasting Arms which have been put under you to pull you out of the quagmires of sin and ignorance and doubt, and placed upon the Rock, which is Christ, the foundation stone of all our faith and all our enterprises, than there begins that long series of exercises, designed in the economy and by the grace of God to wean you altogether from the world and its ways to him and his ways. Now these exercises, whatever form they take, whether light temptations or severe trials, nagging cares, or grievous burdens which can scarce be borne, trifling ailments, or maladies beyond hope of recovery, are designed to exercise that quality, or rather to give birth to and foster that spiritual quality peculiar to God's people, called patience.

What, then, is patience? The world often associates the notion with lack of complaint, with dejected submission, or simply with waiting a long time. This is not all there is in Christian patience, as we shall see as we take up God's Word to trace this important

word in its remarkable associations. Patience is really enduring faith,—faith exercised under adversity and growing stronger. In the Greek where the notes at the end of the page of the English version differ from the American you will see that wherever we have “patience,” the word “steadfastness” is placed as the alternative reading, preferred by the English revisers, and the two things together give you the meaning of the word. The Greek word is *upomene*, which is *holding out*. But it is not holding out in a dejected submission, crushed down, but it is holding out and looking up gladly to God, knowing that God’s will is being wrought, that his purposes are being carried out.

Now you have to go back—let me warn you, always go back to your Bible to find out what words mean when you come across a word that is often used in the Bible; because when a word gets worn it is very much as when you take a coin and use it a long time—the image of the coin, or whatever has been on it, is finally worn off, so you can’t tell what kind of a coin it is, or what country it came from. The world takes words and makes them worse. You know that. The word “despot” didn’t use to be a bad word. The word “tyrant” was not a bad word to begin with, nor was the word “villain” bad to begin with. But the world has made them all bad. You know very well that the words “by and by” in our old Bible, when it was first translated, meant immediately, right away. But those words do not mean that now. And so with “charity”—how the world has defaced that word in handling it! I am ashamed to use that



word now. I never speak of a "charity patient," never; because as it is used there is a stigma associated with the word. I like to call my free patients "honor patients." So with the words "hypocrite" and "ungodly." The Bible speaks of the ungodly man. It does not mean the notorious sinner, but a man without God. So with "unrighteous." So with the word "son" in the Bible. It does not mean some person who, by austerity of living, has brought himself into some extraordinary kind of religious frenzy. It means that which every one of us has and is in Christ. We are sons by calling, every one of us, which imposes a responsibility to live up to that which we are before God.

I find patience mentioned only two times in the Gospels (in Luke 8 and 21) where the groundwork of patience and her exemplar were being set forth in Christ's life and character. These two times are significant. In the first, patience is connected with the apprehension and the holding fast of the Word. Now I would just like to dwell upon that. I want you to get this word "patience" well down into the fibers of your being, because it is the great Christian characteristic which you will need to carry you along through that which is to come in life. Christ is talking of seed sowing, which responsibility is imposed upon every one of us, that we should sow the seed, and he tells us, you know, that "the seed is the Word," and that the good ground in which the seed is sown is in honest and good hearts. Having heard, is that enough?—Hold it fast, and bring forth fruit with patience. There she sits between the two. The word from

God, you hold it fast and bring forth fruit with patience. Please remember the associations. Then again, you notice the significance at the end. He told them that at the beginning. He tells them this at the end. Notice the significance. He was telling them of the terrible times that should come,—earthquakes, famines, pestilences, and signs from heaven. “Ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake. And not a hair of your head shall perish. In your patience ye shall win your souls.” Salvation, then, is to be won by patience.

It is quite characteristic that though patience was abundantly manifested in the enduring faith of the Old Testament saints, it is scarcely noted there as such. It was left to the new and clear relationship established in Christ to develop this as a great quality.

Now let us try to catch a glimpse of what this thing called patience really is by noting her in some of her associations and settings in God’s Word. First look at Romans 5:3. You know we have three ladders there in Romans. I cannot pause to dwell upon them. We will take two of them. “Being, therefore, justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and let us rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” That is God’s way—sweet, simple, short. That is the way of practical experience. We have it given right afterward—the same ladder. Now comes the practical experience. “Not only so, but we also rejoice in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience probation (or experi-

ence), and experience hope, and hope putteth not to shame, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us." So you begin with faith. The next step in your life which comes probably a considerable number of weeks after that, control,—patience; patience under control. And may be after awhile, after the repeated exercise of patience, and your being thrown back on God continually, on him, not on man, on him and not on yourself, on that which he gives and not that which you evolve from yourself or your will power, God will count you one of his experienced ones, one of his proved ones, one of the officers of the guard. Then will that hope shine forth clear. And the Bible means that hope of Christ in heaven to be revealed, manifested here on earth in glory.

That patience is a supreme virtue in the sight of the Spirit while we are here on our earthly pilgrimage is evident from Col. 1:9-11, where these things are predicated—"filled with a knowledge of his will, strengthened with all power, bearing fruit in every good work, increasing in the knowledge of God." Tremendous proposition for mortals like us—poor, frail humanity! What does it all culminate in?—"Unto all patience and long-suffering with joy."

#### THE RELATION OF PATIENCE.

Now, patience has a dual relationship, having qualities heavenly and qualities earthly. I would have you for a moment look at some of the associated sisterly qualities with which the omniscient mind of the Spirit has coupled her. Let us turn first to

2 Cor. 6:3-10. What a spectacle you will find there of the Christian life! There she sits at one end of the table with a goodly company of thirty-seven brothers and sisters, while at the other end she sits "possessing all things." Again let us turn to another little group, where she takes a humbler, yet reckoned by Christian experience, a higher position, in 1 Tim. 6:11. The lesson there is this: Avoid the consuming passion of money-getting. It ends in sorrow. And how often you and I see that in these days! I don't know whether you see it as often as I do, but I see a great deal more of it at Baltimore in the people who drift in there from all over this country, who have wealth and nothing else, and how thoroughly one realizes Christ's saying, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God."

Then come and sit down, O man of God, at this table. And who shall our guests be? Here they are in order—Righteousness, Godliness, Faith, Love; all members of heaven's nobility. But will such a distinguished company of the immortals admit any other members on terms of equal fellowship? Yes, for here are two you and I would never have thought of counting among them—Patience and Meekness.

You need not be surprised at this assemblage, for you do not have to look far through the Word to find a wonderful consistency in this exaltation of patience. Look at this little group and catch a note touching the quality of patience. (1 Thess. 1:2, 3). "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers. Remembering without ceasing

your work in faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." And again in Titus 2:1, 2: "But speak out the things which befit sound doctrine, that the aged men be temperate, grave, sober-minded, sound in faith, in love, in patience." Patience stands right up in the first rank of the highest Christian experience. And so again in Rev. 2:19.

Now, if you want to catch her once more in her large family relationship, look at 2 Pet. 1:6, and you will find a goodly company, as well as in 2 Tim. 3:10, where in a family of ten she sits with Love on her left and Persecutions on her right hand. We see her last in Rev. 14:12,—a large company, on the one hand those who have the mark of the beast on forehead or hand, who have to drink of the cup of the wrath of God, on the other the patience of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Surely I do not need now to urge upon you as you go hence the vast importance of patience, mentioned about thirty-two times in the New Testament. Beginning with Luke 8, run through and study it out for yourselves.

Lastly, in what spirit do you go? Here let me charge you most earnestly, for according as you go in this spirit or in that will your work succeed or fail. It matters not how famous you become, or what institutions are reared to do a mighty work under your fostering care, or even what great discoveries you may make. You may, as you pursue your calling, with the foundation laid here, lay bare and master the secrets of diseases which have from time im-

memorial ravaged our race; and yet, if you go not in the right spirit, all will be but dead works. I am thus earnest and emphatic, because in these days there are many spirits abroad. We are living in a day when Bibles are printed and circulated, and the Bible is talked about as never, perhaps, before in the world's history, and yet days in which God's Word was also never less known. Bibles are turned out by the ton,—given away for nothing, or for a few pennies, and yet when we come to take statistics in our institutions of learning anywhere in our land, we find that the children coming out of our homes know practically nothing about God's Word. We live in days of new *isms*, of teachers professing to honor and professing to draw their inspiration from God's Word, who yet magnify only themselves. We are living in days when new and subtle philosophies are abroad, offering themselves as acceptable substitutes for the true faith. One of these parallels is as much like our faith as a false coin newly minted is like the true gold—hard to distinguish until you get it in your hand and ring it. I talked with a man representing one of these *isms* on the train about three weeks ago, and the parallels between the *ism* and God's Word were truly marvelous. Extraordinary cunning Satan has developed in these days, and yet absolutely without proof,—a mere philosophy of living, Christ left out, and not a word about the Holy Spirit or His work.

You will distinguish the false from the true if you hold fast this Word of truth, this Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. You will detect the false ring if

you note, as your interlocutor glibly praises the new faith, that Christ (though his name may be mentioned) is so completely left out that you are ready to cry, weeping, with Mary, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." You will find this above all things, that all these false systems leave out the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, and if they mention his name and his work, narrow him down to some little method of theirs, that he must act through such and such channels, in such and such ways.

Here, my dear friends, is the secret of the weakness of our churches today—taught false systems, particularly as these false systems have their strength in our churches, and people have been studying them for a lifetime under Christian ministers. Here is the explanation of all the lamentable ignorance of the things of God in pulpit and in pew. Here, in this lack of knowledge of the work of the Spirit is the cause of the prevailing coldness. This explains why missions languish, and the heathen in the Sudan, and in India and in China, when they cry for bread receive a stone. Be very clear about this, and know that even as when our Lord was on earth, it may be said today of people at large, sad though the words are—let me repeat these words of John the Baptist, "In the midst of you standeth One whom ye know not,"—a person definite and real, as real as our Lord himself, though unseen, a comforter, a guide, a teacher, the power of the church, the great Life-Giver. See what our Lord says of him in John's Gospel. Only run through it yourself. Chapters 1, 3, 7 and

14-16. And then see how like a flood he comes in, according to our Lord's promise in the Acts,—spoken of some fifty odd times, about as many times in the one book alone as in all the Gospels. Recognize him and his work, and he will be in you the power of Christ, living again on earth, and working his will through you.

I charge you, therefore, that you go forth to your work in Christian patience, and in the power of the Spirit of God.





